

need to take 2 years, I'll tell you that.

You think about it, Truman, Eisenhower, Kennedy, Johnson, and Nixon all followed Roosevelt, and all of them tried to get universal coverage. Richard Nixon proposed an employer mandate. Senator Bob Packwood from Oregon, still in the United States Senate, introduced it for him. And we've been fooling around with this now for decades. Meanwhile, we just keep paying more for less. We ought to be paying less for more. That's what you do. That's why most of you are doing very well, because you have provided more for less. Why should you be stuck with a health care system that does the reverse?

I ask you to please, please engage yourself in this debate. Examine this plan. When the book comes out, go over it. If you've got a good idea, give it to us. But don't walk away from the plain obligation to have every American family with the security of health care and the plain need to let the small business people in this country and the self-employed people

in this country and the middle-size business in this country have the same bargaining power in this system that big business and Government do.

And most of all, remind the Members of the Congress that there are times when doing the right thing morally and ethically is also good business, that we can make money if we make our workers more secure and whole. When they go home at night and look at their families over the dinner table and they know they've done right by them, then America will be on its way to having the courage and the security to seize the next century and keep the American dream alive.

Thank you, and God bless you all.

NOTE: The President spoke at 11 a.m. at the Grand Hyatt Washington Hotel. In his remarks, he referred to Helen Mills, CEO of the Mills Group and Soap Box Trading Co., and Arnold Hiatt, CEO of the Stride-Rite Foundation.

Exchange With Reporters on Health Care Reform October 21, 1993

Q. Mr. President, why is it taking you so long to draft the health care legislation?

The President. The legislation has been drafted. What we have to do—and let me say we're doing something that no administration, as far as I know, has ever done before. But the reason that we had to delay introducing it is to go back and do two more runs at higher inflation rates, because most people believe that inflation will be a little bit higher because economic growth has come back into the economy.

So we originally ran all the numbers at a 2.7 inflation rate, which was what we were asked to do, what was recommended by the Congressional Budget Office. We now went back, after consulting with our folks, and ran it at a 3.5 percent inflation rate, and then we went back and doublechecked all the numbers with all the actuaries. So unlike a lot of the other bills, we actually have, you will see when the bill comes up, extremely detailed budgetary estimates about

which part will cost how much and how it all works.

So essentially, there were no problems in drafting or the policy so much as it was trying to make sure that we had the numbers right. Also, the proposal will increase the reserve fund as a hedge in case, for example, the small business discounts cost more than we thought. We decided to go back to make the Congress and the country feel better about the costs to increase the reserve fund. So just working out the dollars is what has taken all the time, because we wanted to have good numbers ready for them when we came back.

Q. When will it be ready? When will it be ready?

The President. Oh, I think they're going to put it in early next week sometime.

Q. Next week?

The President. Yes.

Q. The 75-cent cigarette tax is final?

The President. That's what will be in the bill.

NOTE: The exchange began at approximately 11:54 a.m. at the Grand Hyatt Washington Hotel. A tape was not available for verification of the content of this exchange.

Remarks at the Executive Leadership Council Dinner October 21, 1993

Thank you very much, Earl, and thank you, ladies and gentlemen. I actually wanted to hear him talk. I thought I've heard the speech the guy behind him has to make.

I am delighted to be here with the ELC, with Earl Washington and Buddy James and with all the rest of you. I thank you for your achievements in life, and I thank you for the work you have done. The board of this organization met at the White House, I know, last spring, and we have developed a very special relationship.

I was honored to be invited to come by the reception for a moment. I wish I could stay for dinner, but before you asked me to eat I got invited somewhere else, and it's not polite to cancel. At least that's what my mama always taught me.

I want to congratulate your honorees tonight, Suzanne de Passe and Corning Corporation and my friend Dr. Leon Sullivan. And I want to thank all of you for the efforts you're making to make America a better place.

I'd like to also say a special word of appreciation to two very important members of my team who are here tonight, a former board member and officer of this organization and your evening speaker, Hazel O'Leary, the distinguished Energy Secretary—when I saw Hazel tonight I thought nobody would be disappointed that I'm not speaking—and also the Special Assistant to the President for Public Liaison and the highest ranking African-American ever to serve in the White House, Ms. Alexis Herman. I thank her for being here.

Ladies and gentlemen, I ran for President in 1991 and 1992 because I was convinced that our country needed to change its direction and because I thought we were coming apart when we ought to be coming together.

I have always believed that the obligation of a public servant is to try to give every person

he or she represents a chance to live up to their God-given capacity and the challenge to do what is necessary to give others that chance as well. That responsibility takes on different turns and textures, depending on the moment in history when you're fortunate enough to serve. Right now, I think all of you know as well or better than I that in order for every person in this country to have a chance to live up to the fullest of their capacity, all of us have to be committed to making some pretty fundamental changes in the way we operate our economy and the way we work together as a people and the way we relate to the rest of the world.

Whenever people are called upon to change profoundly, we all know that's difficult. I mean, I have a hard time losing 10 pounds. [*Laughter*] Change is not easy. You think about the dimensions of the changes we need to make; we know it is hard. We also know that great democracies normally only make profound changes when it is apparent to all that there is a lot of trouble. The problem with that is, when it's apparent to all that there's a lot of trouble, there are normally a lot of people who are too insecure to want to hear about much change.

If you think about your own life, every one of us has a little balance scale inside, sort of between hope and fear, between being optimistic and averse to today's changes. I know if I get less than 5 hours sleep, I'm less optimistic than I am if I get more than 6, you know. We have that. Every family has it. Every business organization has it. And every nation has it.

I am plagued by the thought of how many Americans are too insecure to feel confident in the future and to grasp the opportunities that are there before us. And so I have this duty to the country, I believe, as President to try to lay down the markers of security that